



How to Phone Interview Well

An interview is the first way a company gets to know you in person and understands what you could contribute to their future. It is important to position yourself well and present the right image.

Phone Interviews

Many companies will do a phone interview as the first step. A phone interview can be challenging because you do not have the normal facial expressions and other ways to judge how things are going. Here are some things to consider when interviewing over the phone:

1. **Schedule the interview** – do not leave it up to chance. You want to control the environment you are in (coffee shops or other public venues are challenging to hear, if you are at home be sure dogs and other people are not in the room and won't interrupt, etc.) so you can be confident the interviewer is only hearing you.
2. **Prepare for the interview** – whether the interview is over the phone or in person, it is vital to prepare. Know about the company from their website or other sites you were able to use in searching, look up the person on LinkedIn, etc.
3. **Think through what you want them to know** – if you were a fly on the wall at the company and could hear the interaction between the interviewer and someone else in their office, what would you want them to say about you? What do you not want the person to say about you? Knowing this in advance will help you convey the right information as you answer questions.
4. **Sit as if you were in an interview** – For a phone interview, it is vital you treat this as any in person interview. Sit comfortably but be sure your full attention is on the phone. Do not hold it to your shoulder and do not put it on speaker!
5. **Speak clearly** – Phone technology is great but it still requires the user to speak clearly. Do not have anything in your mouth and if you tend to speak quickly, try to slow down.
6. **Answer what is asked** – Listen to the question for what they are asking. Be careful you aren't listening for your turn to talk! While the interviewer is working from a form, there are reasons they ask the questions they do so be clear in your answer. If you need a moment to think about how to word your answer, be sure to give them a verbal cue – “that is a great question. I want to answer this succinctly” or something to indicate you are thinking and have not been disconnected.

At the end of the phone interview, ask the interviewer what the next step in the process is. Your goal is to get that next interview!